A Poem Humbly Dedicated

To the Great Pattern of

PIETY and VIRTUE

Catherine Queen Dowager.

ON THE

DEATH

Of Her Dear Lord and Husband

KING CHARLES II.

By Mrs. Behn.

DUBLIN,

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A POEM on Her Sacred MAJESTY Catherine Queen Dowager.

PArdon! Oh *Sacred Mourner*! that we paid
Our firſt ſad Tributes to the *Royal Dead*;
Which did our Souls to rending Sighs convert,
Drain'd our fixt eyes, and pierc'd the bleeding heart;
And for a *Loſs* that Heav'n can ne'r redreſs,
Our *Raging Griefs* were rude in their exceſs:
Which, while with *wild Devotion* we purſue,
Ev'n *Heav'n* neglected lay, ev'n Sacred *YOU*:
Our own dire *Fates* did *all* our Tears employ,
Griefs have ſelf-intereſt too as well as *Joy*.
But when *ſuch Sacrifice* from us is due,
What muſt the *Mighty Loſs* exact from *You*,
Who Moun a *King*, and dear lov'd Huſband too!
How ſhall we meaſure that vaſt tide of *Woe*,
That did your Royal *breaking Heart* o'reflow?
And almoſt, with a high imperious force
Bore down the Banks of *Life* in its too rapid courſe.
Your *Languiſhments* and *Sorrows*, who repeats,
Or by his *own*, on *Yours* a value ſets,
Compares *deep Seas* to *wandring Rivolets*;
Who though a while in their own Meads they ſtray,
Loſe their young ſtreams at laſt in the unbounded Sea.

Shou'd

Shou'd all the Nations tendereſt griefs combine;
And all our Pangs in one vaſt body joyn,
They cou'd not ſigh with *Agonies* like *Thine*.
That You ſurvive, is Heav'ns peculiar care;
To charm our Grief, and heal our wild Deſpair;
While we to *Charles*'s Sacred Relickt bow,
Half the *Great Monarch* we Adore in You:
The *reſt*, our Natural Devotions grant;
We bleſs the Queen, and we Invoke the Saint:
Nor fades your *Light* with *England*'s Worſhip'd Sun,
Your *Joys* were ſet, but ſtill Your *Glory* ſhon:
And with a Luſtre that ſhall ſtill increaſe,
When Worlds ſhall be no more, and Natures ſelf ſhall ceaſe;
For never in *one mortal Frame* did joyn
A *Fortitude* and *Vertue* more *Divine*:
Witneſs the *Steddy Graces* of your Soul
When charg'd by *Perjuries* ſo black and foul,
As did all Laws, both *Humane* and *Divine* controul.
When Heaven (to make the *Heroin* underſtood;
And Hell it ſelf permitted looſe abroad)
Gave you the *Patience* of a *Suffering God*.
So our bleſt *Saviour* his *Reproaches* bore
When Piercing Thorns His *Sacred Temples* wore;
And ſtripes compell'd the Rich *Redeeming Gore*.
Your precious *Life* alone the Fiends diſdain'd
To murder home; your *Vertue* they prophan'd;
By Plots ſo rude; ſo Helliſh a Pretence
As ev'n would call in queſtion *Providence*:
Or why avenging *Thunder* did not ſtrike
Thoſe *Curſed Hands* durſt touch the Sacred *Ark*;
But as where *long* the Sun is *Set* in *Night*,
They with *more joy* ſalute the breaking *Light*;
Heav'n caſt this *Cloud* before your radiant *Beams*
To prove their *Force* by contrary *Extreams*;

The

The Nations all with new Devotion bow
To *Glories* never underſtood till now:
'Twas *Majeſty* and *Beauty* aw'd before;
But now the *Brighter Vertue* they adore.

This the *Great Lord* of all Your Vows beheld;
And with diſdain Hells baſil'd rage repell'd;
He knew your *Soul* and the ſoft *Angel* there;
And long (kind *Rivals*) did that Empire ſhare;
And all your Tears; your pleading Eloquence
Were needleſs Treaſures; laviſh'd to convince
Th'Adorer of your known and Sacred *Innocence*
When not for *Life* the Royal *Suppliant* mov'd;
But *His Belief*; whom more than Life ſhe lov'd;
From whom; if e're a frown ſhe cou'd receive
'Twas when She *doubted* that He cou'd believe;
While he repeats the dear confirming Vows;
And the *firſt* ſoft addreſſing *Lover* ſhows.

By your *reflecting Smiles* the World was gay;
Faction was fled; and *Univerſal Joy*
Made the glad buſineſs of the welcome day.
Ah! too ſecure we baskt beneath the *Sun*;
And little thought his *Race* ſo near was run;
But as if *Phaeton* had uſurp'd its Rule;
In the full Brightneſs of its courſe it fell;
VVhilſt all the *frighted World* with wonder gaz'd;
And *Nature* at her own diſorder ſtood amaz'd:
VVhile you, ah *Vious Mourner* did prepare
To offer up to *Heav'n* your early Prayer; (there:
You little thought 'twou'd meet your dear-lov'd Monarch
But on the VVings of Death the News approach't;
And e'ne deſtroy'd the wondring ſenſe it toucht;
O Mighty *Heav'n-Born* Soul! that cou'd ſupport
So like a God! this cruel *firſt effort*!

VVith-

Without the *Feeblex Sexes* mean replies,
The *April Tributes* of their *Tears* and *Cries*.
Your *Valu'd* Loſs a *Noyſey Grief* diſdain'd,
Fixt in the *heart*, no outward ſign remain'd;
Though the *ſoft Woman* bow'd and dy'd within;
Without, Majeſtick Grace maintain'd the *Queen*!
Yet ſwiftly to the *Royal Bed* you fly,
Like ſhort-liv'd Lightning from the parted sky;
Whoſe new-born Motions do but ſtay and dy.
Such *Vig'rous Life* ne're mov'd your ſteps before,
But here----they *ſunk* beneath the *Weight* they bore.
Princes we more than *Humane* do allow,
You muſt have been *above* an *Angel* too;
Had You *reſiſted* this ſad *Scene* of Woe;
So the *Bleſt Virgin* at the Worlds great loſs,
Came, and beheld, then *Fainted* at the Croſs.

Methinks I ſee, You like the *Queen* of *Heav'n*,
To whom all *Patience* and all *Grace* was giv'n;
When the Great *Lord* of *Life* Himſelf was laid
Upon her Lap, all wounded, Pale, and Dead;
Tranſpierc'd with Anguiſh, ev'n to Death *Tranſform'd*,
So She *bewail'd* Her God! ſo *ſigh'd*, ſo *Mourn'd*;
So His bleſt *Image* in Her Heart remain'd,
So His bleſt *Memory* o're Her Soul ſtill *Reign'd*!
She Liv'd the *Sacred Victim* to deplore,
And never *knew*, or *wiſht* a Pleaſure more.

But when to Your Apartment You were brought,
And *Grief* was Fortify'd with *ſecond Thought*;
O how it burſt what e're its Force withſtood,
Sigh'd to a *Storm*, and ſwell'd into a *Flood*;
Courage, which is but a peculiar Art
By *Honour* taught; where *Nature* has no Part:
When e're the *Soul* to fiercer Paſſions yield,
It ceaſes to be brave, and quits the field;

Do's

Do's the abandon'd ſinking *heart* expoſe
Amid'ſt Ten Thouſand Griefs, its worſt of Foes.

Your *Court*, what Diſmal *Majeſty* it wears,
Infecting all around with *Sighs* and *Tears*;
No Soul ſo *dull*, ſo *inſenſible* is found
Without concern to tread the hallowed Ground;
Awful, and *ſilent*, all the Rooms of State,
And *Emptineſs* is Solemn there, and great;
No more Receſſes of the ſprightly Gay,
But a Retreat for *Death*, from Noiſe and Day:
Eccho's from Room to Room we may purſue,
Soft *ſighs* may hear, but *Nothing* is in view;
Like Groves inchanted, where wreckt Lovers ly,
And breath their Moans to all the Paſſers-by;
Who no kind Aids to their Relief can bring,
But Eccho back their *Pitying Sighs* agen.
But the myſterious *Sanctum* is conceal'd
To *vulgar Eyes* that muſt not be reveal'd;
To your *Alcove* your Splendors you confine,
Like a *Bright Saint* veil'd in a *Sable* Shrine;
As the *Chaſte Goddeſs* of the *ſilent Night*,
You Reign alone, retir'd from *Gaudy Light*;
So Mourning *Cynthia* with her Starry Train,
Wept the ſad Fate of her Lov'd ſleeping *Swain*.

FINIS